

No. 20.

SMITH RIVER INDIAN RESERVE, *September 9, 1866.*

SIR: Having been appointed special Indian agent in consequence of the removal of Mr. Bryson, late agent of the above-named reserve, I have the honor of submitting an annual report, as desired in your last communication, under date of August 14, 1866.

Having, as stated, been appointed simply as special agent, and not having charge of the reserve quite two months, I cannot make a very extended report, and will confine myself only to statistics and general farming interests connected with the reserve. This reserve is located on Smith river, three miles from its mouth or entrance to the Pacific ocean, being in Del Norte county, situated in the northeast part of the State near the Oregon line, and west of the coast range of mountains.

The locality of the reserve is most admirably situated, being a mild and healthful climate, an abundance of arable land of unsurpassed fertility, convenient to timber for fuel, fencing, or building purposes; also an abundant supply of water either from springs on the place or from small streams that flow from the mountains. In this particular locality there seems an inexhaustible supply of small fish called smelts. The Indians are very fond of them. They catch them in the surf with dip-nets in great quantities in the summer and fall months, and cart them to the reserve by wagon loads. Also the Crescent City, Lagoon, Burnt Ranches, and Smith River Indians, numbering about five hundred, carry away annually large quantities, constituting one of their chief supplies of food during the winter months. In addition large quantities of salmon are caught at the mouth of Smith river, which are much desired by the Indians as well as white residents.

I find, on taking as careful a survey as possible, about four hundred Indians on the reserve, and they are known as the Wyalackees and Humboldt tribes. The Humboldts, as a general thing, are superior in intelligence; they learn to speak the English language more readily, and are generally more expert in taking hold quickly and learning the ways of farming in all its particulars.

I am satisfied there has been much improvement among the Indians since the agency has been established in the valley. They desire to live and dress better, and are more cleanly about their buildings and in person. Their demeanor in many respects indicates a wish to elevate themselves to the standard of the white population in matters pertaining to civilization. The Indian women likewise are generally improving; most of them cut their own clothing, and their

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garments show much skill in cutting as well as in making up. I have observed, since I have been on the reservation, a desire on the part of some to learn to spell and read. I think, perhaps, if a school were established it might prove beneficial.

Relating to the clothing of the Indians, I would here mention they are at present in a deplorable condition; many of them have not clothing sufficient to cover their nakedness. I cannot urge too strongly the importance of supplying them with necessary clothing as early as possible, as the fall rains will soon commence. Justice requires they should be well supplied for comfort as well as for health.

Within the time that I have acted as special Indian agent on the reserve there has been some uneasiness on the part of the Indians. They are under the firm belief that the government does not intend to purchase the valley lands for a reserve, and during the past year have expressed much discontent and a strong disposition to return to their former locality in Humboldt county. I have every reason to believe their want of faith in the intention of our government respecting them is the only cause of so many of them absconding during the months of July and August. With this exception everything is peaceable and quiet on the reserve—no difficulties of any importance having occurred either among themselves or with other Indians in the vicinity of the reservation.

The farming utensils are much worn, and in the event the Indians should remain here and the service continue, a new supply of many articles will be an absolute necessity.

The reserve is well supplied with live stock, consisting of horses, cattle, and swine. They are all in a thriving condition. So far I have not been under the necessity of killing many beef cattle for the Indians, from the fact of the large supply of fish being procured from the sea-coast.

Concerning the crops I find an abundance of everything that is desired to subsist the Indians for another year, consisting as follows: 85 acres of wheat, unthreshed, which will yield 15 bushels per acre; peas, 45 acres, yielding 33 bushels per acre, ungathered; oats, 100 acres, which will yield 50 bushels per acre, partially threshed; timothy hay, 40 acres, all cut and mowed away, estimated at 2½ tons per acre; potatoes, 85 acres, yielding 160 bushels per acre, ungathered. There is in addition to the above 15 acres containing carrots, turnips, and other garden vegetables. They are looking well, and will yield a fair crop.

With reference to the sanitary condition of the Indians, I am confident that it has very much improved under the care and management of Dr. F. M. Wright, resident physician. I feel that he is entitled to much credit for his services and interest manifested in their behalf. For further information relating thereto I refer you to his annual report, herewith respectfully submitted.

I remain your obedient servant,

G. KINGSBURY,
Special Indian Agent.

Hon. C. MALTBY,
Superintendent Indian Affairs, California.